



STATE OF MARYLAND

## DHMH PRESS RELEASE

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### **Maryland Awarded Grant to Create Healthier Communities**

**Baltimore (September 27, 2011)** The Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH) will receive \$1.9 million in federal funding to support efforts to prevent chronic diseases, according to an announcement made today by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). The newly awarded Community Transformation Grant is aimed at reducing diabetes, heart disease and stroke across the state. The grant will also support new efforts to promote healthier lifestyles, reduce health disparities, and control health care spending in Maryland.

Maryland applied for the funds through the DHHS's Community Transformation Grants, which support public health efforts to reduce chronic diseases. There are two types of grants for states and communities: capacity building and implementation. DHMH was awarded an implementation grant to support efforts among 19 of Maryland's smaller jurisdictions. *(Under the terms of the federal grant requirements, Baltimore City, Baltimore County, Anne Arundel, Prince Georges, and Montgomery counties were excluded).* In addition to specific actions in the 19 covered counties, DHMH will undertake several statewide policy and change initiatives, and build new resources that will improve wellness statewide.

"Governor O'Malley and I are committed to addressing chronic diseases and improving the health of communities throughout the State of Maryland, said Lt. Governor Anthony Brown. "This grant will allow us to expand our efforts to prevent obesity, tobacco use, high blood pressure, and high cholesterol – the leading causes of chronic diseases – and help build stronger, healthier communities."

"Maryland is one of the most ethnically and economically diverse states in the country, said Dr. Joshua M. Sharfstein, DHMH Secretary. "This grant will help us to improve health outcomes for vulnerable populations most at-risk for death or disease related to chronic diseases."

The grant will include support for Healthiest Maryland, a campaign engaging leadership in communities, schools, businesses and health care to commit to adopting proven wellness practices. Communities will receive support to implement evidence-based policies and best practices and receive technical assistance.

“In Maryland, chronic diseases such as heart disease, cancer, and diabetes are the leading causes of death, disability, and health care costs, accounting for 70 percent of all deaths each year and 75 percent of all medical costs” said Frances B. Phillips, DHMH Deputy Secretary for Public Health. “Although chronic diseases are among the most common and costly health problems in the country, they are also among the most preventable.”

Along with other priorities, Maryland’s State Health Improvement Process (SHIP) provides communities with specific goals and tools to reduce chronic disease through local action and public engagement. For information on the SHIP, see <http://dhmh.maryland.gov/ship/visions/vision5/visionarea5.html>.

To learn more about Maryland’s prevention and wellness projects, visit <http://fha.maryland.gov/cdp/>.

Overall, HHS awarded approximately \$103 million in prevention grants to 61 states and communities, reaching more than 120 million Americans. To learn more about Community Transformation Grants, visit [www.cdc.gov/communitytransformation](http://www.cdc.gov/communitytransformation).

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